

# Runaway & Homeless Youth Spending

(FY2022 Appropriation Act - Public Act 87 of 2021)

**March 1, 2022**

**Sec. 461.** (1) *From the funds appropriated in part 1 for runaway and homeless youth grants, the department shall maintain the recent \$500,000.00 state general fund/general purpose revenue increase to funding to support the runaway and homeless youth services program. The purpose of the additional funding is to support current programs for contracted providers that provide emergency shelter and services to homeless and runaway youth.*

(2) *From the funds appropriated in part 1 for runaway and homeless youth grants, the department shall allocate \$400,000.00 to support runaway and homeless youth services programs. The purpose of the additional funding is to support current programs for contracted providers that provide emergency shelter and services to homeless and runaway youth.*

**(3) By March 1 of the current fiscal year, the department shall submit to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on the department budget, the house and senate fiscal agencies, the house and senate policy offices, and the state budget office a report on the total amount expended for runaway and homeless youth services programs in the previous year, and the total number of shelter nights for youth provided.**



## **Homeless Youth and Runaway Expenses and Bed Nights for FY21**

For fiscal year 2021, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) expended \$6,841,549 to support Homeless Youth and Runaway (HYR) programming, including both Basic Care (BC) and Transitional Living (TLP).

Participating youth between the ages of 12-17 received 7,381 shelter nights in the short-term emergency BC program. This 21-day shelter program focuses on preventing youth from entering the child welfare or juvenile justice system by assisting youth who have runaway or who have been kicked out of their homes to reunite with their families and address challenges in their homelife. In addition to the emergency shelter services, youth and their families receive case management and counseling, referrals to other needed services, and support to make sure that the youth continue their schooling or are enrolled in school. Programs also provide up to 90 days of non-residential services to youth and families to either prevent running away or to ensure that a youth returning home from a shelter stay has the supports in place to stay home.

Homeless youth between the ages of 17-20 received 42,567 bed nights of transitional residential shelter. These programs provide youth with up to 18 months of shelter in conjunction with comprehensive programming that includes case management, counseling, independent living skills training, and educational and employment

Both the BC and TLP programs continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic during FY21 with staffing and outreach to clients as two of the larger challenges addressed by providers. Providers increased their pay to maintain competitiveness and amended their policies to allow for hazard pay and retention bonuses when resources allowed, but still faced the recruitment and staffing challenges faced by many businesses. Illness of staff, need to quarantine due to exposure, and the need to care for sick family members also created staffing shortages in programs throughout the year. All programs did manage to stay open throughout the year by cross-training administrative staff and utilizing staff from other program areas to fill gaps in staffing when necessary.

Outreach was another area where agencies worked to overcome challenges. Since the beginning of the pandemic, referrals from schools (a main source of referrals) have dropped almost 10%. This was because many schools remained virtual during most of the year and schools that had in-person learning were limiting access to the building for health reasons. As schools prepared to return to in-person learning at the end of fiscal year 2021, agencies worked to strengthen relationships with teachers, counselors, and principals to reinvigorate those referrals. There were slight upticks in referrals by word-of-mouth or self-referrals, suggesting that other outreach methods including social media and traditional media may have countered the reduction in school referrals.